

Dear Howard,

5/10/75

Today, after the longest and best night of sleep I've had since the beginning of the illness is the day of greatest weariness. But I've done no physical work at all. Dozing when I rest has slowed down my reading of your book. I napped all during Lil's after-lunch grocery shopping when I'd taken the book to read. I'm at 200 and I am not puffing you to tell you that it is a truly superior work with an added asset: you have done exceedingly well in selecting and simplifying. This surely is the time for that. And there should be a market for it.

Jerry has told me of the New Times/Belin project and of his asking you in. Accept and insist on content. It is an important project and you have the better command of the evidence. Sylvia's work is fine but it required extreme condensation to make space for a reangling of your handling of the Belin-Ball witnesses. I believe that when they were partners (and what the media generally prefers, not just Nixon conservative but Pat Brown liberal) and worked on their witnesses and parts of the Report together each assumes blame for the work of both.

Use what you have written but angle to Belin (or Ball, which includes getting the rifle that didn't get into the building into it that a.m.)

If you go forward with the project, which means if you have assurance of pay, I'll give you what I think is more important in the present context and I'll give New Times a way of jazzing it up decently (so you won't have the work to do). Until then it is premature and I've promised it to another, who'll probably choke first now than ask.

Speaking of pay, I presume you have your summer planned. But if I can make a deal for Post Mortem that does not include a condenser and can get enough front money for you plus a percentage of royalties, would you be interested in cutting it to no longer than your book (shorter if possible because there will be new to add)?

There is supposed to be some interest. This need mean nothing. But in the event one that does not include the one who condenses comes to pass, would you want to if it can be done while there is no school and what would be your minimum cash requirements? And from your recollection, assuming that whole parts are eliminated entirely, how much time do you think it would take to contract the rest? There would then be the "sensational new material" added at the end. Not really much work. Or, some could work in well, as Memo Transfer in Hades not Camelot.

The federal work with and for the Rockefeller Commission seems to be quite extensive and forecasts as bad as I'd expected about the Ripoff Associates/ Commercializers combo. No time for details you do not now need. But Belin heads it all. And Ford has the greatest stake. And it is all outside even reasonable extension of the function of the Commission.

Don't forget: in the Ford Report for Life you have Ford commercializing his work and presenting Belin's evaluation as his own. Nice pairing? (Non-witness Brennan the most important witness.)

Best,